

JROTC

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The Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) is a program offered at over 3000 middle and high schools nationwide, affecting over half a million students. The course is marketed as a way for students to learn discipline, leadership and physical training. In addition, students shoot guns, march and learn military history and behavior. By conservative estimates, JROTC costs \$75,000 per school once the program is past its start-up years on things like in remodeling, equipment, transportation, uniforms, etc. Also, the instructors are not even certified teachers, but (usually) retired military personnel. Some students even get assigned to the class and cannot get out of it. The military claims that it is not a recruiting program but about fifty percent of its students join the military, often because of the benefits given to them as graduates of JROTC programs.

Things to find out and ideas for JROTC campaigns/projects:

- • Does your community have JROTC programs? At which schools?
- • Research and expose the amount of money JROTC is costing taxpayers in the area
- • Find out what JROTC programs are doing (shooting guns, military chants, etc.)
- • Find out if students want to be in the class, or if they are stuck in it
- • Propose or coordinate other programs that would teach discipline, leadership, etc.
- • Are schools in your community on the waiting list to get a JROTC program? ([click here to find out more](#))

As of June 2006, there are:

- 1555 Army JROTC units[2]
 - 794 Air Force JROTC units[4]
 - 619 Navy JROTC units[5]
 - 260 Marine Corps JROTC units[6]
 - 1 Coast Guard JROTC unit
- However, there is hard evidence for its effectiveness as a recruiting program: according to the Army, half the young people who graduate JROTC join the military, most going directly into the enlisted ranks.

They also estimated \$56,000 in start-up costs for the district's 15 units, including classroom renovation and secure storage facilities for weapons and uniforms. Some branches of the military require the districts to pay for uniform cleaning and equipment maintenance.

Under the standard JROTC contract, the DoD provides students with books, uniforms and "special equipment" like the rifles. Insurance, building facilities and maintenance, and half the salaries and all benefits: all of these are costs to the district. Again, when the Pentagon approaches a school board they often present quite different figures, and for the first few years the costs may be lower.

The military's high school training program, the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), is sold to school districts as a "free" program. Too often, school boards and school administrations sign on the dotted line before the truth sinks in: that JROTC costs. The Department of Defense contributes a relatively small portion of the overall financial burden - it's school districts underwriting the cost of teaching young people to march, drill and learn military history and behavior. And the military's initial offer is a one- to three-year special, after which the costs go up significantly.

JROTC's claim to be a low-cost youth development program fails on both counts. Not only does JROTC do little for at-risk youth beyond tracking them into dead-end military jobs, but it's not free or even inexpensive. By conservative estimates, JROTC costs \$75,000 per school once the program is past its start-up years. These are funds coming directly from school districts -- funds that could be spent on smaller class sizes, art and music programs, or a host of other vital needs.

Chicago public schools are home to the largest junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program, which oversees the MSCC, in the country.

When moving up to high school, Chicago's graduating eighth-graders can choose from 45 JROTC programs, including three full-time Army military academies, five "school-within-a-school" Army JROTC academies and one JROTC Naval academy.

Fifty-four percent of JROTC participants nationwide are students of color. JROTC graduates are recruited directly into the lowest military ranks. The military targets low-income schools in the same way tobacco & alcohol companies target low-income communities.

Resources

- Orgs
- How to get out of JROTC classes

- Campaigns/projects

- Organizations Opposed to ROTC
- War Resisters League
- Committee Opposed to Militarism and the Draft

- Stories from the ground

- Let's Play War: How Militarism is Marketed to Children
- Navy JROTC Targets 208 High Schools

- San Francisco Votes to Replace JROTC: First City to Eject High School Military Program
- SAN FRANCISCO: School board votes to dump JROTC program

- San Francisco JROTC threats to students that spoke out against Militarism in their Schools
- Midwest Catholic Worker resistance retreat
- Conservatives for Kidnapping
- No Where Else to Go: Latino Youth and the Poverty Draft
- The Struggle Against ROTC in Puerto Rico